



Notification of Substandard Conditions

(Note To Tenant: Be Sure To Send This Letter To Landlord Certified Mail And Return Receipt Requested)

This is a notification that I, _____ a tenant at _____
Tenant's Name **Tenant's Address**

_____ am reporting the following substandard conditions:
Tenant's Phone Number

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

(List additional substandard conditions on separate sheet)

This letter is to formally notify _____ of _____
Landlord Name **Address**

contacted at the following number: _____ of these conditions and to give
Telephone number

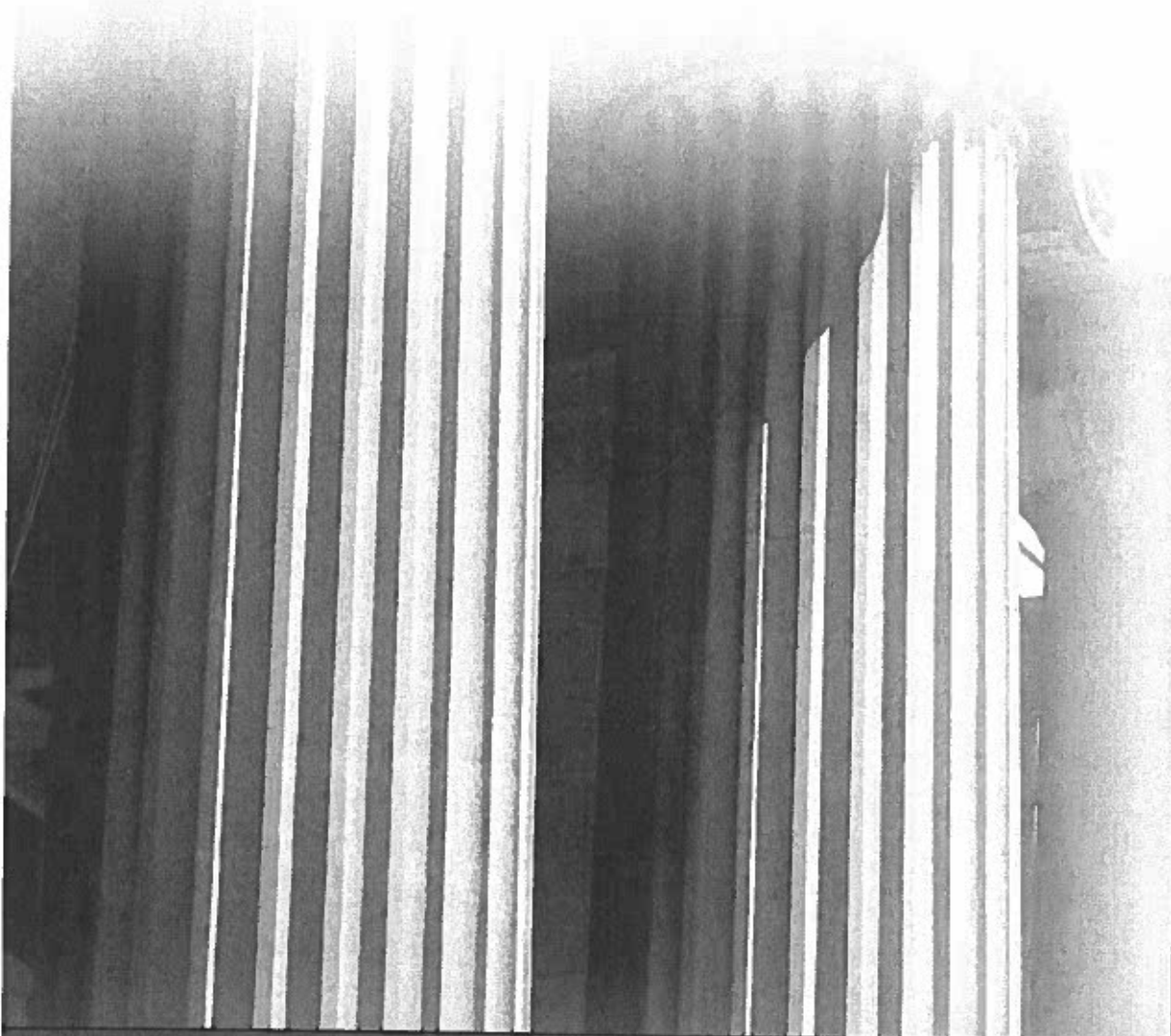
them 14 days from the receipt of this letter to correct them. After that period of time, if these conditions have not been corrected, the Orangeburg County Permitting and Inspections office will be notified and requested to begin a substandard housing investigation.

Signature of Tenant: _____ Date: _____

Send or drop off a copy of this letter and all attachments to:

Orangeburg County Permitting and Inspections
1437 Amelia St
Orangeburg SC 29115
Office: 803-533-6173

SOUTH CAROLINA BAR
Tenants' Rights and the Law



notice for the overdue rent once. Alternatively, if the written rental agreement contains a notice that the landlord will terminate the lease if the rent is five days late or if the landlord has previously given the tenant notice during the same rental period, then the landlord can ask the magistrate to evict the tenant without further notice. If you have not paid your rent, the landlord cannot take or hold your property without first going to the magistrate and having you served with a distress warrant. Some property cannot be taken. If you are served with a distress warrant, consult a lawyer. If you move or abandon the property and leave some property worth less than \$500, the landlord may not have to go to court to hold and sell that property. If a court finds that the tenant's nonpayment of rent is not in good faith, then the court can order the tenant to pay the landlord's attorney's fees.

DO I NEED A LAWYER IF I HAVE A PROBLEM?

Maybe not. First, notify your landlord of the problem in writing. (Be sure to keep a copy.) If you are not satisfied in a reasonable time,

you may file a claim against your landlord in magistrates court.

EVICCTIONS

A landlord cannot evict a tenant, without going to court. It is illegal to lock a tenant out or turn off the utilities. If your landlord tries to evict you illegally, you may be able to stay in the house and recover damages and attorney's fees. If you are served with eviction papers, consult a lawyer. You must respond within 10 days. If you do not respond, the magistrate will issue an ejection order. A landlord may be able to evict you if you have been accused of a crime though not yet convicted. If you are convicted for breaking the law in your home, you probably can be evicted. You cannot use your home or allow anyone else to use it for illegal activities. If your landlord knew your apartment was in bad condition before your rent came due but failed to make repairs, tell the judge. The judge may let you pay a reduced rent based on the true value of the rental property.

LANDLORD'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The landlord is not to interfere

reasonable time. If the landlord still does not make the repairs, you can end the agreement and move without paying additional rent. This option is only available when the problems put you or your family's safety at risk. The security deposit must be returned if there is no reason to hold it. You *cannot* make repairs yourself and deduct that cost from your rent. You *can* go to court and ask a judge to order the landlord to make the repairs. If the landlord says you must move before repairs can be made, you can ask for damages, such as your costs to move and pay rent at another apartment.

WHAT CAN MY LANDLORD DO IF I DAMAGE THE PROPERTY?

The landlord can send you written notice that the damage must be repaired within 14 days. If you do not do so, the landlord may enter the apartment and make the repairs and also may go to court to evict you.

CAN THE LANDLORD ENTER MY HOME AT ANY TIME?

No. Generally your landlord

must give you 24 hours notice and get your okay to enter. If there is an emergency such as a fire or broken water pipe, the landlord can enter without your permission. If a court order or the police are involved, the landlord is not required to give you advance notice. If your landlord enters without notice, you can take him or her to court for violating your rights. The tenant may not restrict the landlord's access to the property by changing the locks without the landlord's permission.

DISCRIMINATION

Landlords are prohibited by law from discriminating against potential renters. If you feel you have experienced discrimination, call the Housing Discrimination Hotline at (800) 424-8590.

MANUFACTURED HOUSING EXCEPTION

Rental of certain manufactured housing is governed by different rules found in the Manufactured Home Park Tenancy Act. For more information, visit the South Carolina General Assembly's Web site at www.scstatehouse.net.